Chapters of a Lifetime

By: Alexis Anderson, Riley Blum,
and Cadence Goblirsch

DEDICATION

To the elders who shared their stories, and to the generations who will listen.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

Chapter 1: “She Walks a Lot”

Chapter 2: “The Second Verse”

Chapter 3: “Cruising the Seven Seas with Sharon”

Chapter 4: “Do As I Say, Not As I Did”

Chapter 5: “Don’t Worry, Be Happy”

Chapter 6: “Life’s Too Short”

Chapter 7: “The Art of Starting Over”

Chapter 8: “Reflections”

Chapter 9: “Going Strong, Enjoying Life”

Chapter 10: “A Hard Start, But a Good Ending”

Chapter 11: “102 and Going Strong”

Conclusion

Questions to Ask

Acknowledgements

INTRODUCTION

Chapters of a Lifetime is not just a project, but a collection of memories—people's stories, experiences, and traditions live on in each and every page.

Our mission is to ensure that stories never fade over time. Instead, they are preserved and ready to be learned from by generations to come.

Memories should be cherished, not forgotten.

Age discrimination, or prejudice based on a person's age, is a problem that shapes people's perception of seniors.

Ageist language, stereotypes, and discrimination prevent elders from participating actively in the public space, often silencing the stories that have contributed to the history of their families and their communities.

"I think older adults don't share their stories because they're never asked," said publisher, author, and founder of *Hear Your Story*, Jeffrey Mason. "Every person has an amazing life story that people should hear … When you let people be people, real connection happens. The more you know about each other, the more you see how alike we really are."

“I realized I knew my dad as my dad, but I didn’t know him as a person,” Mason reflected, highlighting how easily personal histories can go unexplored, even within families. “Storytelling is how traditions, family stories, and culture get passed down.”

These words reflect a reality many older adults face. Their stories are not absent because they lack meaning, but because opportunities to share them are rare. When elders are not asked to speak, generations miss out on crucial life lessons about resilience, change, and lived experience.

Listening is a powerful act. By choosing to listen, younger individuals acknowledge that wisdom does not simply disappear with age, and that if anything, it grows. These stories help bridge the gap between generations and create understanding where there might otherwise be distance.

The world is a hectic place, filled with people who have busy lives. Oftentimes, it is hard to slow down. However, if people simply took a step back, they would be able to see what has been right in front of them, the thing they have been missing. It is important for people to take advantage of the valuable opportunity to sit down and listen to the older people in their lives while they have it.

Aside from the benefits people can gain by simply *listening* to the older individuals in their lives, those who share their stories can gain from it as well. They can find comfort in knowing that their story will never fade and that others are listening to and learning from their knowledge.

Sister of Notre Dame de Namur, Carol Miller, shared her insight on the topic. "In other cultures, gray hair is a sign of wisdom or knowledge … The premise of personhood is the intrinsic value of a soul or being."

She further emphasized this belief, stating, "It's the person first and then the condition second," a reminder that age should never overshadow an individual's humanity.

This is to say that every existing being has value, regardless of factors like age, race, or gender, and that this value deserves to be acknowledged through respect, listening, and understanding.

Sister Carol said it best, "Elders are people. We're not commodities or products. We are persons."

"She Walks a Lot"

Joanne Ferretti

Joanne Ferretti—born on April 22, 1950, in Berkeley, California—has lived a life of learning, resilience, and deep connection to family, faith, and community.

Growing up, she spent much of her childhood with her family, who played an important role in shaping her early memories. Every year, they took a two-week vacation that included a week of camping in the Sierra Nevada mountains and another week at the beach in Santa Monica. These trips were some of her favorite traditions and gave her a love for the outdoors. Through them, she also gained many valuable skills, from fishing and hiking to learning how to behave in restaurants.

Beyond these trips, there are numerous ways by which her family taught her several other important life lessons. At home, she was especially influenced by her mother, whom she remembers as a warm and optimistic person.

"She could make a paper bag look beautiful. She just carried herself very well, and she was an amazing listener. And so I try to listen. I think of my mom when I do," reflected Joanne.

As Joanne grew older, her childhood experiences led into a new chapter when she began attending Holy Names High School in Oakland. Because she lived in Diablo Valley, Joanne found herself taking the bus to school every day: something that became a regular part of her routine.

Throughout her high school experience, Joanne considered herself to be more of a "floater," moving between different social groups, rather than just being tied to one. With only about 120 students in her graduating class, the environment was small, making this shift between groups easy.

Outside of the social sphere, two things that greatly influenced Joanne's time in high school were drama and chorus. She participated in several productions each year, and her passion was reflected in her success, as she took lead roles in many of the shows.

She credits this to her strong stage presence, saying, "My drama teacher one year said I was far more successful as a boy, so I always got the leads… Puss in Boots, I was Puss. Aladdin, I was Aladdin… I was the prince because I could project my voice and go deep when I needed to."

As for the academic portion of her high school career, Joanne admits that, like many, she found junior year to be the most difficult. She also confesses that math

was not her best friend: "The fact that I passed algebra the second year of algebra was a gift from God, because it was the hardest thing I've ever taken in my life."

However, despite having weaker subjects, Joanne also had classes in which she excelled: namely, English. Not only did she greatly enjoy the course, but she was good at it, too.

"I can write, it's a delight to be able to do that…I am also an avid reader," shared Joanne.

This love for literature extends beyond her high school career. She continues to return to certain books, especially during more overwhelming moments.

"There are three books that I go back to on a regular basis when life gets overwhelming… One of them is To Kill a Mockingbird. I've probably read that book once a year. The other is This Is Happiness… and then The Lord of the Rings trilogy," explained Joanne.

Together, her academic interests and extracurricular involvement made high school a formative time, both in and out of the classroom. This was, in part, because of the fact that she attended an all-girls school.

This environment shaped how she views friendships and has allowed her to develop strong, lasting friendships with other women. To this day, she keeps in touch with her old classmates.

“We stay together through a Zoom group every Tuesday, and it's a group with people from all over the United States. So you know, we've got folks as far as Florida and Alaska, and we have maintained that feminine friendship, and that's been very important to us over the years,” detailed Joanne.

As her high school years came to a close, Joanne was ready to take the next step and find a college that felt like the right fit. Touring the UC campuses with her father is when she discovered what would later become her alma mater: University of California, Berkeley.

Joanne recalls her initial thoughts on the school, saying, “There was something about Berkeley, and I can't tell you what it was. It was the zeitgeist that just really appealed to me. And never have I looked back.”

Coming from a small, all-girls, Catholic school, the transition to a campus with roughly 28,000 students was, to say the least, a large one.

As if that wasn't enough of a change, Joanne also went during the late 60s-early 70s: a time of political unrest. This climate ultimately contributed to the shaping of her political views.

"You know, I'm a lot more liberal than I would have been probably any other if I'd gone anywhere else, at least at that point," described Joanne.

While the school did influence this aspect of her life, her college experience did not only revolve around politics.

In her years at Berkeley, Joanne majored in English, spending much of her time reading and writing papers. She also lived in a sorority, though not a very traditional one, which gave her a sense of community on campus.

Socially, she had a serious relationship during her freshman and sophomore years, something she later reflected on, saying she might have been more independent if she could do it over. Later in college, she met her future husband and eventually got married, marking another major chapter in her personal life.

Scholastically, Joanne had originally planned to become a nurse, but after struggling with organic chemistry, she came to the conclusion that this path

wasn't for her. So, she decided to shift her focus to teaching, which ended up being a decision that guided her professional life.

Joanne worked primarily in elementary school, but much of her early career was spent substituting due to funding cuts following Proposition 13. In addition to this, she worked as a music and performing arts specialist, spending her days singing and dancing with students.

However, her career path took an unexpected turn after the sudden death of her first husband. With little prior experience, Joanne took over his heating and air conditioning business, entering a field where few women were represented at the time.

"Absolutely nobody expected a woman to do that," she said.

Despite the challenges, she managed the company for five years. During this time, she not only learned how to run a business but also how to navigate financial independence, something she had not previously been responsible for.

"Everything was a learning curve," she explained.

After running and eventually selling this business, Joanne began her work with the Catholic Church. She

worked at Saint Bartholomew in San Mateo, helping children and families, developing programs, and creating curriculum.

Through this work, she found herself becoming more involved in her faith, which led her back to school. Joanne attended Santa Clara University, where she earned her master's degree in theology.

Alongside her career, Joanne also built a family. She says that her daughter, Kelly, and her grandchildren, Sean and Kailee, are her biggest accomplishments. Joanne also feels as though her grandchildren are what bring her the most joy in life, showcasing her deep love and commitment to her loved ones.

Now, Joanne keeps busy with the little routines that bring her joy. She goes on walks almost every day and thoroughly enjoys listening to audiobooks as she takes these strolls. Spending time with her husband is also very important to her. She explained how one of their favorite activities is watching movies together. Whether they are binge-watching TV, talking, or traveling to Croatia in the summer, they always enjoy each other's company.

Joanne leaves future generations with a few pieces of insightful advice: "The earth is your mother. Treat her with respect. And you don't need anywhere near as much as you think you do. We all need to have

enough so that everybody can have enough. Don't lose hope. Always have hope. And find something or someone that you can fall in love with that will get you up every single day. That may be God, that may be a relationship, but we all need something or someone that we're in love with, and I think God fills the hole that a lot of people have."

Captured Memories

These photos show Joanne and her family, reflecting the strong connections and memories that have defined her life.

"The Second Verse"
Bettina Devin

Bettina Devin has spent her life in the spotlight, overcoming obstacles, and never giving up on her passion for performing.

She was raised in San Francisco, California, by her supportive parents. With a father who was a beloved and respected physician and a mother who was a successful buisnessswoman, Bettina learned a great deal from her built-in role models. Her parents were major influences in her early life, and she credits her love of performing to her mother.

Bettina always knew that she wanted to be a performer.

"From the minute I came out, that's the moment I wanted to be a performer. Shirley Temple was my idol…I wanted to be just like her…"

Bettina's mother loved to entertain and often hosted large dinner parties that Bettina remembers fondly.

"It was really fun, really fun, and I've inherited that love of that kind of entertaining and throwing parties and bringing people together… I'm a networker," stated Bettina.

One of her favorite family traditions was her mother's Thanksgiving party, which hosted all of their family friends and cousins.

Bettina attended two all-girls high schools in San Francisco. She started at Sarah Dix's Hamlin, which she attended from sixth through ninth grade, before transferring to Burke's, now known as University High School, for the remainder of her high school years.

At Hamlin's, she spent her free time playing volleyball and basketball before transferring to Burke's where she sustained a knee injury her first week there.

Outside of playing sports she focused her time acting and singing in various musicals and plays. She attend singing lessons as part of her theatre journey.

She was the lead in both *Alice in Wonderland* and *Peter Pan* during her junior and senior years, and reflects on how her experience in high school theatre sparked her obsession with being a performer.

"I was taking singing lessons. I was just so obsessed, even then, with wanting to be a performer."

Outside of performing, she developed a love of languages from her French class. She was fluent in the

language during high school, but ultimately lost that skill later in life. Her ear for language tied into her love of dialect, which plays a big role in musical theatre.

Besides the time she dedicated to strengthening her performance skills, she often hung out with her friends in the San Francisco Presidio and Laurel Village. They would often spend time at diners, specifically one called the Feed Bag, which served traditional burgers and shakes.

"... This was just like a neighborhood mill in this place, the Feed Bag, but Laurel village was basically two blocks long…Our parents all shopped there. I'm sure there was a bank, but that's where we all hung out, unless it was our neighborhood, just where we all lived, that those were the hangouts really."

After high school, Bettina attended three colleges: Boston University, Dominican College, and United States International University (USIU) of Performing Arts in San Diego. She attended school in Boston for one year before discovering she missed California and the performance culture that came with living there.

She was enrolled at Dominican College, a Catholic College in San Rafael, California, for two years and majored in music. She recalls being one of the only

two Jewish girls on campus and doing many musicals during her time there.

Bettina made her final transfer to USIU of Performing Arts in San Diego and ended up graduating with honors earning a Bachelor's of Fine Arts.

Her time in San Diego was extremely challenging but also extremely rewarding. She entered the school as an extremely talented singer but did not have the dance experience that her peers had gained from years of training.

Despite her immense talent, Bettina lacked confidence in her abilities. She was concerned about the way others viewed her and worried that she would fall behind because she only had a singing background. It wasn't until a class reunion that she was able to see the true impressions she left on her classmates.

"... Especially a lot of the guys come up to me and say, Oh my God, you were so talented. Oh my God, that voice. Oh my God. Oh my God. We all thought you were such a star, and I was not aware of that at all when I was there, because I was so worried about how I came off…"

After graduating from college, Bettina moved to Los Angeles, where she lived for 20 years. During her time there, she participated in many different productions. One of the most notable being *A Little Night Music* by Sondheim.

Although her time in LA harbored success, it wasn't without its struggles. In addition to professional struggles, she also went through a personal challenge that spanned from her senior year of high school through her time in LA. Bettina describes an eating disorder that at times prevented her from being able to pursue her career.

"...I went through, you know, months of just eating and eating. So I was 50 pounds heavier than I am at my top weight, and I would go up, lost 30 pounds, go up, do nothing, just eat all night, sleep all day, not audition, do no performing, have no relationships with men."

Her struggle with her weight was especially amplified during her time in Los Angeles due to the intense competition within the industry. She describes how her fluctuation in weight was amplified during times when she booked acting jobs.

"...and, LA, you know, everything is looks and, you know, and I wasn't pretty enough to be the ingenue or

the lead, but I wasn't heavy enough or ugly enough to be the character, so I was kind of in the cracks."

She describes this as one of her greatest struggles, and she is incredibly proud of overcoming a challenge that had consumed her life for years.

After living in LA for 20 years she moved back to the San Francisco Bay Area. While she was no longer in Hollywood, she still kept up with her career by booking various jobs. She was invited to film Dead Time Stories on Nickelodeon, and even produced her own film, Lox, from a short play written by a 15-year-old boy.

She reflects on producing Lox as one of her favorite experiences in the film industry, and it was an incredible success, winning six awards and being selected at over 30 film festivals. Two of the six awards were for Bettina as Best Actor.

As Bettina has grown older, she has begun noticing how ageism has affected the volume of jobs she is able to book.

"I look young for my age, which sometimes is a problem, because they want me to look 80 or 90…but I'm definitely perceiving that things are getting less, the opportunities are getting less…"

It also influenced her to make her movie, *Lox*, because it was something that she could do entirely on her own without someone handing it to her.

Although she has faced many challenges, Bettina continues to find joy. While she unfortunately lost her singing voice about 20 years ago, an event she describes as her "greatest sorrow", she still finds happiness through acting, coaching, and spending time with those she loves.

When asked what brings her the most joy in life, she recalls the time she has spent with her long-term boyfriend.

" But I would say being with my boyfriend, it's just joyous…and we have a lot of fun and we laugh and we laugh, and we're juvenile."

Bettina leaves future generations with a few pieces of advice. She shares a quote that had been embroidered on a pillow and gifted to her by her mother: "to thine own self be true".

She also emphasizes the importance of being true to oneself, stating, "We have to be true to ourselves. Otherwise, we're going to end up being unhappy, angry people. And not everybody has the luxury of being true to themselves, but there you've got to at least try to find a way, whether that means you go

after fighting climate change or being an actor or scientist or politician or whatever…"

Bettina Devin's story is not defined by a single moment of success, but by her ability to continue forward despite change. Whether facing personal struggles, industry limitations, or the realities of aging, she has remained committed to her passion for performing through it all. She decided to name this chapter of her life "the second verse," signifying that while she has grown older, she has started to write a new chapter of her life, proving that growth and reinvention don't end with age, but instead take on new meaning.

Snapshots of a Lifetime

Photos from Bettina's life, including moments from her childhood and glimpses into the lives of her parents, reflecting the origins that shaped her passion for performing.

RECIPE FOR Green Goddess Dressing

RECIPE SOURCE Shirley Levy SERVES

2 cups mayonnaise
3 tblsp. tops of green onion
3 tblsp. Chopped parsley
3 " tarragon vinegar
1 can anchovies
Put in blender.
To make even richer, add ¼ pt. cream or sour cream.

CONTINUE ON BACK SIDE

RECIPE FOR Swedish Roast Leg of Lamb

RECIPE SOURCE SERVES

Stick bits of garlic in leg of lamb. Rub with 1 tblsp salt and 1 tsp. DRY MUSTARD. ROAST ACCORDING TO TASTE AND WHEN ½ DONE BASTE WITH 1 TEASP. SUGAR: 2 TBLSP CREAM & A JIGGER OF BRANDY AND 2 TBLSP STRONG COFFEE

"Cruising the Seven Seas with Sharon"

Joseph Lysek Jr.

Joseph Lysek Jr. was born on March 22, 1944, in Darby, Pennsylvania, a suburb of Philadelphia.

Reflecting on his childhood, he fondly remembers his favorite foods growing up: "Believe it or not, it was smelt… my dad used to cook them, just dusted in flour and frying in a frying pan. He also made great potato pancakes."

Joseph's parents, Joseph Sr. and Margaret, shaped much of his early life. A major influence was a friend of his father named Frank.

"We still fished a lot, and his mother used to make great fried chicken," he recalled.

Growing up, many family traditions were part of his life, including going to Mass each Sunday, as well as having holiday dinners at his grandfather's home on Good Friday with his extended family. Holiday traditions continued later in life, traveling to Philadelphia and Toronto to celebrate with loved ones.

School memories were also important. Joseph attended Monsignor Bonner High School with nearly 700 graduates in his class. While he didn't play

organized sports, he enjoyed informal games like touch football and baseball. His favorite class was history, particularly lessons about the Civil War. However, even though he had many of these interests, he confesses he really did not have a defined career path when he was growing up: "I really didn't have any thoughts about what I was going to do."

After graduating from high school, Joseph joined the Air Force, serving for four years, including a station in San Antonio, Texas, and eighteen months in the Philippines.

He credited the military with shaping him: "The four years of this military helped me out a lot."

Following his service, Joseph worked for the post office and pursued higher education at night. He graduated from La Salle University with a Bachelor of Arts in History in 1981. His dedication and hard work led him to become a postal inspector, with assignments in Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Pittsburgh.

One of the most defining aspects of Joseph's life was his relationship with his wife, Sharon. They were married on May 10, 1988, a day Joseph describes as bringing him the most joy: "Most joy in life, I guess, would be May 10, 1988, when I married my wife."

Sharon worked as an Air Canada employee and ultimately attained the title of assistant general manager of reservations in Tampa: "There were two of them, her and another guy."

Travel and adventure played an important role in Joseph and Sharon's lives together. They spent several years cruising around the world and creating new memories.

Their life together also included difficult challenges. Sharon developed dementia later in life, and Joseph became her primary caregiver for over two and a half years.

"The neurologist… she said she really was surprised I was able to take care of her by myself for two and a half years because we never had any children," he shared.

Sharon passed away on March 28, 2022, just days after Joseph's birthday and 2 months before what would have been their 36th anniversary, leaving behind memories of a deeply loving partnership.

Outside of work and family, Joseph also enjoys reading. His favorite authors include Clive Cussler and Daniel Silva.

When asked about advice for future generations, Joseph emphasized education and hard work: “Don’t fool around in school, study and make a name for yourself.” He reflected on the experiences that shaped him, from his military service to his career as a postal inspector, each contributing to the person he became.

Joseph Lysek Jr. has lived a life full of love, service, and adventure, from growing up in Pennsylvania through his travels with Sharon to all his work commitments, which focused on increasing his knowledge and becoming a better person. Joseph's journey shows us all how he persevered throughout his life, remained dedicated, and found happiness through shared experiences. “Cruising the Seven Seas with Sharon,” he says, perfectly captures the chapter of life that brought him the most happiness.

Portraits of a Journey

A collection of cherished moments shared with his wife, Sharon, capturing a life of love, adventure, and togetherness.

Alyeska pipeline
VISITOR CENTER
"The Pipeline People"

05.25.2011 19:01

"Do As I Say, Not As I Did"

Linda Rosner

One of the most defining aspects of an individual's life is their culture, which influences their upbringing and perspective on the world around them. In the life of Linda Rosner, this holds especially true.

Born on September 27, 1947, in New York City, Linda was brought up in traditions that would later influence her life.

While Linda was born in Manhattan, she only spent the first few years of her life in the city before moving elsewhere. Nevertheless, some memories from her early life have stuck with her over the years.

"Before I was two, my dad, who was doing a residency in thoracic surgery, took me down to Central Park. I didn't live too far from there, and rented some tiny, tiny ice skates and taught me how to ice skate."

After leaving Manhattan, her family moved to Staten Island. In her new home, Linda would sit by the window, watching the snow fall from the sky.

"We lived on the seventh floor of an apartment building... I was wishing I was a snowflake so I could float."

She also spent some of her time visiting her grandparents in Brooklyn, who had immigrated from Eastern Europe. She said that they spoke Yiddish at home and that this gave her a "connection to the old country," even though she was living in the United States.

Her upbringing was largely influenced by her mixed heritage. Linda was Cuban and Jewish, and her family followed both traditions. Her grandmother and great-grandmother lived with her, which, to her, was part of the immigrant culture.

"My grandmother lived to be 101 and my great grandmother lived to be 106," explained Linda.

Her family practiced both Jewish and Catholic holidays, getting presents during the holiday of Hanukkah, as well as Christmas. But there was one thing that stood out above the rest, and that was the appreciation for being in the United States.

"Both sides of my family had come from other countries, and that made us really appreciate being in the United States," shared Linda.

When Linda was five years old, her family moved across the country to California, settling in San Marino, just outside Pasadena. Moving from the East to the West was indeed a new chapter for Linda, one filled with new opportunities, especially in school.

Because the area was so well funded, her school, San Marino High School, offered an unusually high number of school performances.

Linda took full advantage of this and got very involved in theater, participating in nearly every production.

"We did four plays and one musical a year," she shared.

Linda's theater pursuits also provided her with some very memorable experiences, though not all of them were as successful as others. One special memory was from her time in *The Music Man*.

"I was one of the dancers, and my boyfriend was one of the barbershop quartet, and our director, Mr. Clapper, caught us making out backstage, and he kicked me out," reminisced Linda.

In addition to theater, she stayed quite active with a variety of other extracurriculars. She joined the debate club and started a folk music club, making her schedule as full as possible.

It is safe to say that Linda's time in high school was, for the most part, a positive one. She made lifelong friends and stayed close to many of her classmates over the years. She attended every class reunion, from her 10th to her 60th.

“I loved school. I loved high school…I feel sad for people who don't like school, because I found it so stimulating and exciting,” she said.

When she was younger, Linda could see her future play out in a multitude of ways. She considered becoming a diplomat, a ballerina, or even a psychiatrist—none of which were remotely similar, but they all seemed like good ideas at the time. However, like many people, her path changed as she got older, as she had to think more realistically about supporting herself.

“It did change, because you have to earn a living. I don't have a sugar daddy, so I became an interpreter. By chance. It was like something we say in Hebrew, ‘Min Hashem’. I mean, it came from heaven.”

While helping her husband with a problem at an immigration office, she asked if they were looking for Spanish translators. The office, which was short on staff, encouraged her to apply. After passing an FBI background check, she got the job.

“That was in 1977 and I've been interpreting ever since,” she said.

This line of work also gave her the much-needed flexibility she required in order to raise her kids.

"Well, the interesting thing about an interpreter is I was an independent contractor. I was not an employee of a court or a county, so I was able to have a flexible schedule. I could accept or deny assignments, and so I could be present for my kids if they had an event at school or if they were sick," detailed Linda.

Rather than limiting herself to interpreting, Linda tried many other things too. She worked as a preschool teacher, a baker, and a dance instructor. She even participated in dance therapy, which was a newer concept.

However, there was one thing that remained constant throughout all of this: her love of language, which was a result of her early exposure to different languages and cultures.

Family has also remained one of the most important aspects of Linda's life. She is a mother of four children, who are all grown and have their own families.

"Four amazing kids… it's the most beautiful thing," she said.

There is no doubt that Linda's job and family led to much fulfillment in her life, but every story has its challenges.

One specific issue that Linda faced was discrimination. She had felt the effects of the "glass ceiling," which had seen men being placed in higher positions of power while women worked behind the scenes. Instead of continuing to struggle against these systems, she had eventually decided to concentrate on stability.

"I just finally realized… you need the money. Shut up, do your job," she explained.

A few key experiences have had a big impact on how Linda perceives the world. One of these was her participation in the hippie movement as a young adult, and she tells the story best:

"Well, I have to admit, I was one of the flower children, the hate Ashbery, that whole hippie flower child debacle, it had some very negative effects on our society, but it also had some very positive effects, because the man who became my first husband and I ran off to the woods and became Woods hippies…We were farmers, subsistence farmers, and I milked goats and I fed chickens, and if I wanted to eat chicken, I had to kill it myself. It was a very significant awakening to see that we could survive in nature and that we could live in harmony with nature."

Another important event in her life was the sudden death of her father at age 48, when Linda was just 21.

“It really hit me how such a vital, strong, intelligent, amazing person could be just like that, gone... So that really spoke to me about the fragility of life and how we need to really love and care for and honor the people in our lives and appreciate them,” reflected Linda.

Her spirituality also influenced much of Linda's life. Having dipped her toes in various religious practices, she eventually found a sense of balance.

“I was Episcopal. I was Catholic, then Hindu. I was born again Christian, Pentecostal, and then finally, 30 years ago, I became Jewish, and it really grounded me. It was like such a foundation. The Christianity was very emotional, and the Judaism is very rational, so it really helped to stabilize me.”

Nowadays, Linda derives pleasure from the things that have always brought her joy. These are music and dance: two essential elements in her life.

“Music… lifts your spirit,” she said.

Looking back at her life, Linda offers advice to younger people. First of all, she encourages them to make the most out of their opportunities.

“Listen to your elders. We may look crotchety but we've had decades of experience, and those experiences bring us wisdom. We can help you.”

Another piece of advice she offers them is to enjoy life while still young.

“Don’t make big decisions. Enjoy life. You only get one life. Don’t mess it up.”

Finally, Linda leaves the audience with eight short, yet meaningful words:

“Do as I say, not as I did.”

Pieces of the Past

Photos from Linda’s life including photos of her family and evidence from her passion as an interpreter.

State of California
CERTIFIED INTERPRETER
Administrative Hearing
English / Spanish
Linda Fuentes Rosner
I.D. # 100022
Certification Expires:
June 30, 2026

"Don't Worry, Be Happy"
Hugh Tuck

Hugh Tuck is many things. He is a father. He is a husband. He is a business owner. He is a man of great intelligence, humor, and love, and his personality is a reflection of the many valuable life experiences he has had.

Hugh was born on December 30, 1945, at San Francisco Children's Hospital—this was four months after the end of World War II. He grew up with a large family in Hillsborough, California.

"I had seven brothers and sisters. There were eight children in our family, [King, George, Bobby, Hugh, Terry, Cathleen (Cab), Gail, and Loretta (Sis)]. We were a good Catholic family. Occasionally, everyone would eat at "the big table", as we called it. That would be the whole family, plus my dad and mom. But normally, when we were kids, we ate in the breakfast room, just the little kids."

Hugh's parents were Janor and Robert (Baba) Tuck, who. He grew up surrounded by love from his family, and he has many fond memories from living in his childhood home, a beautiful house with lots of bedrooms, a swimming pool, a squash court, acreage, and room to wander around. There was even a creek

down below, which Hugh and his siblings and friends used to build dams in.

“Our home was our hangout spot. 1061 San Raymundo Road. Basically we just hung around our big house in Hillsborough. … My favorite memories are playing Kick The Can in the summertime and playing baseball. My dad occasionally would take us on mystery trips, where we'd all just jump in the car, and he would take us somewhere. Sometimes it was to the San Francisco airport when it first opened up. Sometime he took us once to a guest ranch. I don't sure they have them anymore, but it was a ranch where you would go and stay, and they'd have cattle and sheep.”

One of Hugh’s favorite memories from his childhood is building a train set in the basement of the house.

“It had 2 switches, and I built a mountain out of plaster, and the train actually went through a tunnel in the mountain. It was built over a period of years, and I spent many many hours there playing with my Lionel train set. It also had a milk car which would unload little cans of milk onto a platform.”

Hugh also speaks on his love of building things. Even as a young boy, he was always good with his hands.

“I pretty much liked to build things. With my friend Kent Lusignan, we built a dam in the creek. This wasn’t just a dam built out of rocks and sands—this was a dam where we built concrete bollards, and then had boards that we could slide in and out of the dam on. Everybody was very impressed. … We also built tree forts.”

Along with building things, a staple of Hugh’s childhood was pets. His family always had dogs, specifically, black labs!

"We had Skeets, our black lab, and Mandy, another black lab. I can't remember all the dogs. But we always had black labs in our family."

Remembering his childhood with his siblings, Hugh said, “When we were like 11, 12, 13, we rode our bikes down to Towel’s Ice Cream store to get milkshakes. My siblings, Terry, Gail, George, Bobby, we all got along very well. One day we were at Towel’s and we were laughing and just having a good time. And when we went to pay, we found that someone had paid for us because he so enjoyed listening to us and getting along and having a good time.”

Parties were a big part of Hugh’s life growing up. He shares his memories of these family gatherings.

"Our family was a big party family. We always had parties. Easter was the big one, which we have taken up the tradition now. But my dad—we'd have the big Easter party with all the friends and relatives, and we'd have an Easter egg hunt—and my dad would have this fabulous table of prizes for kids. And whoever got the best Easter egg would get the prizes. And that was our big tradition."

Another fun tradition at Hugh's family parties was to make predictions about the future with his siblings. They would refer back to these predictions, and see where life had brought them.

"My sister used to take notes, like on Thanksgiving or Christmas, and we'd all make predictions about the future—what we'd be doing in the future, what we thought our jobs were going to be, or where the world was going to be in the future. And we still have those notes, and they're fun to look at."

Hugh also speaks on who he found most influential in his life.

"Obviously my mother, because she was sort of like—you could do no wrong with her. She was always trying to help you, learn things, do things. Helped out with the Boy Scouts, you know, helped out if you're sick. She took care of you, very

supportive, like all good mothers are. So obviously my mother."

To this day, Hugh is a picky eater. He is not fond of vegetables, nor was he ever. Except for one odd exception as a child.

“Believe it or not, I liked spinach. I liked fried chicken, I liked creamed corn and I liked ice cream. I didn’t like potatoes particularly, but if they have a lot of butter on them, I'll eat potatoes. I hate lima beans. Nobody should ever grow lima beans. They're the world's worst thing ever. I like steak, and I like rice. I love rice."

One important aspect of Hugh’s life was his high school experience. He attended Junipero Serra High School in San Mateo.

"I was very nervous the first day of high school because I came from a public school, and most of the students at Serra came from St. Matthews, St. Gregory, St. whatever, St. Bleeding Hearts. And I was quite nervous, but the first day, there was a guy by the name of Dan Sullivan, who I still see once a year, who came up and said, “Hi, I'm Dan Sullivan. Welcome to Serra High School,” and shook my hand and just kind of introduced me to people, and really made me feel much better about Serra High School."

In high school, Hugh participated in cross country, although he is not sure if he would call that his favorite, because it was hard work. Hugh was also on Serra's swim team for a while, and at the time, the school did not have a pool.

"So we went to a pool in an apartment building. And then after the apartment building, we'd always go get donuts afterwards, and stuff ourselves with donuts. Then I'd get home for dinner, and I didn't want any dinner because I was stuffed full of donuts."

In high school, Hugh's favorite class was Physics. He excelled in math and science, and to this day, he is constantly observing the world around him with an intelligent eye.

"I loved physics because it sort of teaches you how everything works. … For Geometry, I had a great teacher, and I liked that. Algebra and Chemistry I liked too."

Hugh continued his education after high school, graduating from Cal Poly in mechanical engineering.

"I really wanted to be an electrical engineer, but my dad said I was going to be a mechanical engineer. When I first got out of college, I was desperate to get any kind of job, so I got a job at Jack-in-the-Book, which I actually enjoyed, and I learned to like french fried onion rings. And then I went to work for a

company that built steel doors and steel door frames. The company was owned by my father. And then I went to work for Atlas Heating Company [the family business] and I've been there for the rest of my life."

Hugh's brain was always geared toward engineering. He was, and still is, good with his hands. With his intelligent and skilled craftsman skills, it is not surprising that he has a notable invention under his belt.

"A friend of mine and I built [Galaxy Game], the first coin-operated video game in the world. It was not a commercial success, but we built that."

Hugh liked working with his hands, and fixing things. Because of this, he enjoyed running the family business, Atlas Heating and Air Conditioning.

"Running Atlas was often stressful, but there are also rewards in running a successful company. … My initial thought is, my career didn't shape me, I shaped it."

Whether it was running the family company or raising three kids, there was always one person by his side—his wife, Judy Tuck.

"Actually, Judy is wonderful. The reason I liked her is because when I first met her, she spoke her mind. She didn't just want to say what I wanted to hear. She

actually said how she felt. …She was always very happy, and very helpful. If there's ever a problem, she'll rush in to help you. She's just a very good woman, and she keeps the kitchen floor very clean, which is important. … "

Hugh met Judy on a double date. Remembering this key part of his life, Hugh said, "My date was supposed to be Anna, and Don's was supposed to be Judy's. … Judy was *very* cute. … She was independent, and not trying to impress the boys. The next day, I decided to call her for a date. I was sweating like a pig, and she didn't answer the phone. I almost gave up. I did make one more call, and she answered, and the rest is history."

As a son, husband, and father, Hugh knows firsthand how family can shape you for the better, and the innate drive to take care of each other.

"It's inborn in people that you want to take care of your family. I think that's just the way most human beings are born. It's an inbred thing, and if it didn't exist, families would fall apart. People have to take care of each other."

Hugh also shares valuable wisdom he wishes to pass on to younger generations that he learned from a Dale Carnegie course.

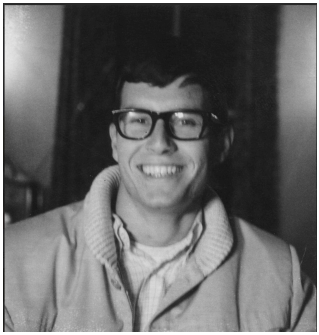
"I think I used to worry a lot before I took that course. They taught me not to worry, because there's no sense worrying about things you can't change. So I have taken that philosophy to heart. I try not to worry about things that you can't change. … And it makes life a whole lot easier to live."

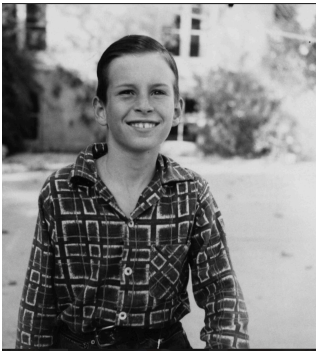
Transitioning into the importance of taking opportunities, Hugh said, "You never know what's going to happen. You sort of have to just get some basic education. And if an opportunity pops up, go ahead and jump on it. You might fail. You might fail again. You might fail again. But I'd say my best advice is look for opportunities, and if you see one, jump on it. Don't worry about failing."

A key consistency throughout Hugh's life, and surely a reason for his many successes, is his ongoing happiness. From playing Kick The Kan with his siblings to running the family business, Hugh finds joy in everything he does. As he puts it simply, "Don't worry, be happy."

Life in Photos

Hugh's photos showcase a glimpse of his childhood, wedding and family all of which helped shape him into the person he is today.





"Life's Too Short"

Judy Tuck

On an autumn San Francisco day in 1947, a bright light came into the world—a baby girl who would grow up to be one of the kindest, most thoughtful, and most giving people out there. An amazing chef, incredible host, and artistic person at heart: Judy Tuck.

"I was born September 13, 1947, at St. Mary's Hospital. My mother wanted to call me Julie, but the nun said that was not a Christian name. And the Christian name was Judith—blessed Judith. So I became Judith Ann Leveroni. And I hated that name—it sounded so harsh!"

Some of Judy's fondest memories are from her early years. Between her childhood home and her grandmother's flower farm right next door, she has simple yet meaningful memories from this time in her life.

"Well, I can remember we lived on a horseshoe, kind of a semi-circle, on Chester Circle. My grandmother's property was right behind us, four acres, and we had a lot of neighborhood kids that would all congregate at our house after school. In fact, one time, I remember lying to my mother because she asked if I finished my

homework, and I didn't, but I wanted to go out and play. So I got in trouble for that! But we just used to climb trees, have fun, and play games until nighttime."

Judy lived with her parents, Nella and Benedetto Leveroni, along with her 3 younger siblings, Jeanie, Joanne, and Benedict. Her grandparents were Benizia and Ernesto Marcelli.

"We never argued. And it's really pleasant to be around a family that settles things. … My grandfather was very sweet. And my grandmother was a tough cookie, she really was. I was a little afraid of her! … Both of my grandparents came from Italy. My grandmother landed in Philadelphia and she worked in the sweat shops at Levi Strauss sewing. And then when she got married to my grandfather, they were tenant farmers in South San Francisco. They grew crops."

Judy's grandparents were role models in her life. She shares what these two very important people were like.

"My grandmother, even in her 80s, would climb ladders to clean the gutters on the roof. She was pretty good. And she loved [my husband] Hugh because he knew how to work with his hands. She admired people that could do that. … My grandfather was a reader. He always had his Italian newspaper.

And he was a quiet man because my grandmother made up for it."

Judy's grandmother Benizia came to America alone, when she was around 19 years old. Her mother had died when she was in 2nd grade, and her father made her stop school to cook and care for the family. She came to America looking for new opportunities.

"My grandmother wanted to move to Los Altos because she knew the weather was better there. So she and my grandpa saved money, and borrowed some from relatives, and they bought four acres in Los Altos. And they planted a lot—we had two or three varieties of fig trees, three varieties of cherry trees, many varieties of apricots, Santa Rosa plums, apple trees, and avocado trees that never really had good avocados. But my grandmother used to graft. She was a very good farmer. One time she had a graft of an apricot and a nectarine and a peach on the same tree."

Judy's family never had to buy fruits or vegetables because her grandmother grew them all. She spent a lot of time on her grandparent's farm, helping out and making memories.

"My grandmother used to make raviolis in her basement. She would have these rolling pins, about three feet long, and she would roll the dough to about four and a half feet long. She would roll it and roll it, and then it would snap back at her—I remember the snapping sound! … And then we as the kids—she would cut with a zigzag cutter—and we would pull the ends away, and then sometimes eat the raw dough!"

Judy also helped plant and sell flowers. Remembering these experiences, she said, "I remember my grandfather would let us sit on the tractor, and he would plow the fields. He would make the burrows, and then we would plant the gladiolus bulbs. I don't remember ever getting paid for this, but to be honest, we just did it because it was kind of fun. And then we would take the flowers we grew to the flower market. … We'd give them 13 gladiolus for 50 cents."

Everyone in Judy's family had a strong work ethic. In fact, her father, Benedetto, was a garbage man, and he would get up at 3:00 in the morning to start work.

Another memory from Judy's childhood is about a cat her family used to feed whenever it visited them. Remembering the experience, Judy said , "My grandmother used to rent property, and there was a white kitten that we had to feed with a bottle. So we

fed her, and my dad called her Miss Kitty. That was a really pretty, fluffy white cat."

Judy had a tight-knit family; they would throw big family reunions at her parent's home in Los Altos, and all of her dad's brothers, sisters, and cousins would attend. She also enjoyed the holidays with her family, and her mother would always make cookies

Judy's pleasant childhood was filled with family and making fond memories. However, she had to overcome challenges as she got older.

"High school was okay, but it was hard for me. It was very tough. I hated school, I couldn't stand math, and I really had problems. I think I probably had a learning disability, but the nuns told me I just didn't try. I know I tried—I just had a hard time."

Judy attended college, and was the first person in her family to do so. She was a determined, strong-willed individual, and decided to continue her education even though she was told not to.

"I was the first one in my family to go to college. Although, the nuns thought I was not college material, so they said I shouldn't go. But because they said I shouldn't go, I wanted to go. And so, I did go, and I liked college."

During her time at San Jose State College Judy met the love of her love—Hugh Tuck. And it all started with a double date.

"Hughey was set up with one of my roommates, Anna Marie, while I was set up with Don Rogers. … That weekend, we were driving home, and I parked the car, and we heard the phone ringing in our apartment. It was ringing and ringing, and I didn't think we were going to make it. And thank God we made it, because it was Hughey asking me on a date, and he said if I didn't answer that time, he probably would have not called back. He said, "Do you want to go out sometime?" And I said, "Sure!" And he said, "Do you want to go out this Friday?" And I said, "Sure, but I work til' 9:00." So after 9:00, he would pick me up from work and we would go out. … I thought he was cute, and he was very nice, very polite, and I really liked him. He had a good sense of humor."

Everything worked out perfectly for Judy and Hugh. Between a double date and a race to answer the phone, things lined up just right. It seemed like a gift from heaven, and in fact, it may have been.

"I met him in 1969, and I'll tell you why I remember that. In September of '69, one of my parents' dearest friends died. His name was John Romelli. And he had said to me, "Judy, when are you gonna find a nice

guy?" And I said, "I don't know—I haven't found anybody yet." He died in September and I met Hughey in September. So I think he put a good word in for me up there."

One of Judy's defining characteristics is her passion for cooking. She is skilled in the kitchen, and once she discovered her love of baking and cooking, it only grew.

"I always must have liked cooking, because when I went to Europe with my sister and my grandparents, I used to write in my diary, and I'd always talk about the food! … I took a series of cooking classes at Jack Liro's in San Francisco. … And then one day, he had a teacher called Flo Braker, who was a nice, kind, talented woman. Truly amazing. She did miniature pastries, and it was like a miracle class. So I asked her a lot of questions…. And she actually gave me a couple of clients. I would make stuff at my house and then bring them to people in Hillsborough. I did a really good job—I was pretty good at it."

As Judy's three children—Christopher, Hope, and Geoffrey—grew older, she got busier and did not have as much time to take orders. So, she started watching the Food Network.

"That's when I started getting interested in cooking food, because I usually just tried to do desserts. … So

Hughey would come home from work, and I would take a class at Cathy's Creative Cakes, because he would watch the kids. He loved doing that. He was a good dad. And he let me go take classes. … That's how I started making gingerbread houses, for gifts and stuff. That was always fun."

Judy's current favorite recipe to make is her legendary coffee crunch cake. She believes it is the best thing she ever makes. Another one of her signature desserts is her sugar cookies, petticoat tail cookies, and shortbread cookies, all of which she makes for her Easter party. Judy is an incredible host—her parties are huge, extravagant, and memorable. From the elaborate decor to the extensive homemade buffet, she never fails to astonish her guests.

"My sister Jeanie wanted to do Christmas, and Joanne did Thanksgiving, so I said, "I guess I'll do Easter." Somebody suggested a brunch, so we started with brunch for just a couple people, just my immediate family. And then it got bigger and bigger. [My friend] Mary Sue would help me, and we'd make arrangements—we'd go to the flower market and buy hundreds of dollars of flowers. But they were spectacular!"

Judy has a lot to be proud of in her life. She shares what she finds most notable.

"My three kids. Hughey and I raised them together—Chris, Hope, and Geoffrey—and I am really proud of them. And also my gingerbread house that I won a prize for."

Judy also has lots of advice for younger generations. After so many different experiences throughout her life, she has plenty of knowledge to be passed down.

"I think what you should do is don't be afraid to try things. Except for drugs. Never do drugs. But take chances—sometimes you have to take a chance once in a while. And always be honest. I was taught to never lie, never cheat, never steal, and be kind. Those are important. Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. Just be kind and considerate to people. Never make fun of anybody that has a problem."

And when it comes to finding your path, Judy's advice is just as simple.

"Sometimes you don't know your gift until you find it, and sometimes it's late. So if you have a gift, pursue it. And if you are not good at something, you keep trying, and you get better. Because I know that is true, for sure."

Judy is a unique individual. She has an artistic soul, and she is a living example of why enjoying life and purring your interest is important.

Judy said it best, "Life's too short."

Moments in Time

Moments from Judy's life, including photos from her wedding, time spent with her sister Jeanie, husband Hugh, and daughter Hope.

"The Art of Starting Over"

Wendy Angeles

Wendy Angeles has spent her life defying expectations, reinventing herself, and proving that it is never too late to start over.

Wendy grew up in the Huntington Beach area of California, and was born into a religious family.

"When I was growing up, my family was a very religious family. We had very strict Mormon rules. So I was the rebellious one, and hated them. My family was very strict, but we were still very close."

Wendy has a large extended family. She even has one uncle six weeks older than her, and one uncle three years younger. She was surrounded by boys growing up—two brothers, her uncles, and cousins. With her family, she enjoyed big picnics, sports, and other outdoor activities.

Since her father was in the Coast Guard, Wendy and her family moved often. They lived in Alaska, New York, California, and Hawaii, moving every couple of years. They even had a dog while living in Alaska.

“I liked Alaska a lot. I like outdoor stuff, and it was beautiful, clean, and very pure. … I haven’t been back. I would like to go back someday.”

As a young girl navigating life across so many different places, Wendy had plenty of time to dream about what her future might look like.

"I wanted to be a taxi cab driver when I was younger. I don't know why, but that was always what I wanted to be when I grew up. Um, I am not a taxi cab driver, nor have I ever been one, not even an Uber driver. I am an executive—I work for a hedge fund, so it's completely different from what I wanted to be when I was a kid!"

Wendy also had an enjoyable high school experience. During her years in school, she played tennis, enjoyed racquet ball, and would go surfing and skateboarding with her friends.

“I was more there for fun than for education. … I liked math class. I don’t know why, but math was my favorite subject. It was easy to me. I hated English. I hated History because it was boring.”

Outside of school, Wendy and her friends used to hang out at the beach in Huntington Beach.

"That was our favorite thing. But the beach doesn't look like the beach did when I was a kid. It's huge. Before it was this rocky little beach, but they've redone it, so it's crazy."

Wendy started college when she was a mother. She graduated with her bachelor's degree before she turned 40, and then got her master's degree a few years later.

Reflecting on the experience, Wendy said, "It was a lot harder having four children going to school. If I would have been smart, I would have done it right out of high school, but I was too busy having fun."

Wendy's husband is Benjamin, and she has four daughters—Sheri, Kristin, Alyssa, and Gabriella. When she went back to school, she attended St. Catherine University in Minnesota. She studied information technology, because it was something that interested her in high school, when all they had was typewriters. She wanted to learn more about computers. It was difficult to be attending school while working and taking care of her children. It was difficult, but she learned a lot.

Reflecting back on her experience, Wendy believed it was better for her to go to college later in her life, because she had been working for 20 years before that. She learned a lot from working, but then reached

the point where she could not go further without a college degree.

"So I had a lot of knowledge, and I thought I knew everything, but when I went back to college, I found out I did not know everything. So, I learned a lot and it was very interesting. And then once I got my bachelor's, I decided I wanted to get my master's. So then I did an MBA, and I did that at another university. And at that point, I had four kids. At the first college, I had three. So it was pretty hard. Luckily, I have a very supportive husband who helped take care of my children when I was in school. So that was very helpful. But it was great—I learned a lot, and I really enjoyed it."

Wendy Angeles' story about reinvention through going back to school is truly an inspiring example. Her story is even more adorable, because on top of this, she is an entrepreneur.

Several years ago, Wendy launched her own business centered around Dragon NaturallySpeaking, a voice recognition software that converts spoken words into text on a computer screen. Her work focused on training professionals—primarily doctors and lawyers—to dictate to their computers rather than type.

Her client base grew far beyond local offices. Wendy worked with clients around the world, and she traveled to major institutions like the Cleveland Clinic to train entire departments of physicians. She also partnered with local hospitals and even worked with police officers, helping them safely input license plate information by voice while driving rather than typing on a laptop behind the wheel.

One of the most meaningful aspects of her work was helping people with dyslexia. For students who struggled with typing due to the confusion it caused, speaking came naturally—and Wendy's training gave them a way to communicate through their computers without the frustration that had held them back before.

After six rewarding years running her business, Wendy received an offer that promised less work and better pay. As she put it simply, "Why not take it?"

Wendy is also an example of what a determined woman can accomplish when she refuses to be underestimated. She speaks on her experiences as a woman in the workplace, the challenges she faced, and the barriers she had to break through to get where she is today.

“I started working basically straight out of high school, I was always looked upon as “the woman.” I

wasn't taken seriously, and was never really given important positions because it was always the man's job, not the woman's. So it always bothered me. And then—I don't know if it was because I didn't have an education that I was treated that way—but once I did get my education, things changed a lot for me. When I had my own business for six years, and then I went to work for another company, I was actually taken seriously. … So I feel like it was hard getting to the point where you're taken seriously … Sometimes I second-guess myself, but I have to stick to my gun. I can be a pretty bitchy person, just because I have to be in order to make people listen to me. But I've gotten to the point where I'm not afraid to do that anymore. You get an attitude when you feel more comfortable with what you're doing!"

One of Wendy's most prominent personality traits is determination. She speaks on her experiences as a headstrong person.

"I'm a pretty strong-willed individual. If you ask anyone around me—I think my career pushed me in that direction—I am the kind of person who will take charge and make sure everything is done right. It happens in my family, and at work. … I think it kind of helped me with my daughters, and knowing not to force them into one type of career. All my daughters have completely different personalities and careers. So I'm glad about that. I've tried to teach my daughters

to do what they want to do. Don't let other people try and tell you what to do. Do what makes you happy."

Wendy has many things to be proud of in her life. Between going back to school and starting her own business, her accomplishments are something to admire and learn from.

"I think I'm most proud of my current position. I am the only woman in my company, and I'm basically the second in control of everything. … I feel pretty good about that. Plus, I've raised four intelligent daughters, who are all very different and each do their own thing. Now, I currently live in Mexico, and I work online. I'm just happy with everything that my life has become. It's great."

Throughout her life, among many accomplishments, Wendy has also had to overcome challenges. She speaks about how losing her parents affected her.

"My mother passed away when she was pretty young—she was 58. And we always relied on her for everything. …. I think it made me more creative with the way I did things. She was very creative. … It changed me from relying on others to relying on myself to do things."

"My father passed away at the end of last year. One thing I had started that I gave him for Christmas the

year before was something called Remento, where basically, you tell stories, and they put it into an audio book. And so I had him do that, which was nice, because we got a lot of really good stories. … My brother and I went back, and we were listening to some of the stories, and there were things we didn't even know about him. So I really encourage people to spend time with their family. I know it's hard because we all have our lives to live, but hearing your parents' stories from when they were younger, it's very interesting. … It's really important to capture history, because it'll be gone if you don't."

This is a lesson she carries with her into every aspect of her life—cheerishing the past while embracing the present, while passing hard-earned wisdom down to the next generation.

"I would say, enjoy life. Don't get married early. Enjoy yourself. Go and do what you want to do. Because when you get married and have kids, you're not going to be able to do what you want all the time."

Having raised four daughters, Wendy knows firsthand how quickly personal freedom takes a back seat to responsibility.

"Enjoy while you can, because once you have responsibilities, you're pretty much stuck where you're at. So when you're young, go out and have a great

time. Enjoy it. Don't get too serious. … Yes, go to college, but I feel like you change as you get older. It's really hard to pick a career when you're 18 or 19 years old."

Yet for Wendy, this is not a message of regret—it is one of encouragement. She has lived enough life to know that wisdom comes with time, and the best thing you can give a young person is permission to find their own way.

"You need to figure out what works for you. Don't let other people try and convince you of things. Enjoy life—take lots of vacations, hang out at the beach, do the fun stuff while you're young. When you get old, my age, then you can start over again."

Scenes from Her Story

A collection of photos of Wendy and her family, with many capturing time spent with her daughters, reflecting the importance of family in her life.

09/06/2009

"Reflections"

Ronald (Ron) Mei

Ronald Steven Mei was born on November 26th, 1946, in San Francisco, California. He grew up as an only child and recalls The City as being a great place to be raised in.

He was brought up in a traditional Italian household and fondly recalls the homemade Italian dinners from his grandmother, specifically ravioli, which she would always allow him to taste the first bite of.

His parents, Angela and Renato Mei, were both major influences in his life. Both had an excellent work ethic. His mother worked as a bookkeeper, and his father worked for over 30 years at the same job.

He had many family traditions during his childhood, the largest being Easter and Thanksgiving, which were both hosted at his house. They would attend annual Christmas and New Year's Eve dinners at his Uncle Steve and Auntie Mary's house. Today, he carries out these traditions with his three daughters and each of their families.

During the summer months, he spent his days at his grandmother's house in the Portola District of San Francisco. Since both of his parents worked full time

jobs, he would pass the time with his grandma, often hanging out at their family business, the University Mound Flower Nursery.

The Nursery was started by his grandfather, Giovanni Garibaldi and his four brothers in 1921 and operated until 1990.

Ron has fond memories of helping his Uncle Steve with various tasks around the nursery, which inspired his love of being outdoors and gardening.

During the school year, he attended St. Elizabeth Catholic School in SF for elementary school and then attended Riordan High School for the remainder of his teenage years.

He recalls his time in high school, stating, "Oh, my high school, four years at Riordan, an all-boys school, was pretty fantastic."

During his time there, he played intramural sports and freshman basketball, which he recalls fondly. He also enjoyed getting to meet different types of people from all across San Francisco.

Ron enjoyed most of his classes at Riordan, specifically history, algebra, and chemistry. He also remembers one of his English teachers and recalls

how he was the first person to truly teach him to write.

"The teacher at the time, he was difficult, but he taught us how to write, which is really important to have to be able to express yourself, you know, on paper."

This English teacher, as well as the dean of students, Mr. Rubio, were two role models who helped shape Ron during his high school years. He describes Mr. Rubio as a guiding figure, one who was extremely strict but also cared deeply about each and every student at Riordan.

Every day after school, Ron would spend time with his friends on the bus ride home, often stopping for cheeseburgers at a local drive-in.

"But, you know, like a lot of kids in high school, we used to take the bus home from Riordan and stop at a drive-in and get like cheeseburgers and go home and then eat dinner."

They would also spend time at the local parks playing basketball or whatever sport was most popular at the time.

After graduating from high school, Ron attended the University of San Francisco and graduated in 1989 with a bachelor's in biology.

His mother wanted him to be a dentist, but he was never interested in that profession and instead wanted to get into the fish and game industry, which was a motivator in his decision to declare biology as his major.

Throughout his time in college and after graduating, Ron attempted to apply for different jobs within the fish and game industry but found little luck. Finally, in his senior year at USF, he was desperate for a job and applied to work at the post office. He accepted a job as a letter carrier and delivered mail around Hunters Point for three months before resigning.

After resigning, he entered a reserve unit for the Vietnam War at the Presidio of San Francisco.

"So we joined what they call a reserve unit at the Presidio of San Francisco. My job was training to be a medic, and I went to basic training in Texas."

Once he returned from basic training in 1970, Ron once again began searching for a job and ended up right back at the post office. This time, however, the job stuck, and he worked as a mailman for 38 and a half years, following the same route every day.

Due to his college degree, when he first started working at the post office, they wanted him to stay in management, but he refused, instead opting for working outside instead of at an office desk.

"I like being a mailman. I don't think I could have survived working inside, in a postal facility, but outside, you know, I had my earbud in listening to news, sports, music, and I did the same letter route, the same mail route for 28 years. So I knew a lot of the families and got to see the kids grow up."

The same year that Ron started his job at the post office, he also met his wife, Donna. She grew up in the same neighborhood as he did, but they attended different schools and didn't really know each other until they were introduced as she grew up next door to a friend of Ron's. They got married in 1971 and moved from San Francisco to Pacifica in 1973, where they raised three daughters together, Amy, Gina, and Lisa.

"I mean, that's probably the biggest event in my life, meeting her. You know, when you find somebody that you really love and is a good person, character-wise, and you're so lucky, that was without a doubt, the biggest event in my life."

When asked what brings him the most joy in life, Ron brings up the time he has spent raising his three daughters and spending time with his six grandchildren, Brandon, Brett, Alexis, Lilly, Adeline, and Nina.

Ron maintains a positive outlook on life, always telling his daughters and grandchildren to be grateful for what they have.

"...but the thing is, I have nothing to complain about. I would just say always stay positive. Look at life through the glass half full. You know that being positive, it just makes life so much easier."

Ron also reflects on the unpredictable nature of life. He emphasizes that things don't always go according to plan sharing examples from his own story

"Life doesn't go in a straight line, you know, they're a little sideways, and nooks and turns but I would say whatever you do in life, just have a passion for it."

As Ron has gotten older he has become more reflective about his life and experiences. When asked what he would title the current chapter of his life he simply went with the word reflections.

"...as you age, you get more reflective. Your priorities sort of change. You know I would say that I am very

happy to be here at this age, because the alternative isn't very good. So I'm very happy to be this far."

He acknowledges some of the challenges that come with aging and shares stories about how some of his friends in the tech industry had a hard time getting a job once they reached the age of 60.

He also shares a personal experience where he faced ageism when he and Donna were trying to adopt a dog during the pandemic. Many adoption centers wouldn't allow them to adopt and were skeptical of them as owners due to their age.

Ron's life has been defined by hard work and a deep appreciation for family. From his childhood in an Italian-American household to an unexpected career, his life is a testament to the importance of staying positive and open to change.

Through the Years

Ron's photos show his life through the years including moments from his childhood to life with his daughters and grandchildren.

"Going Strong, Enjoying Life"

Terry Goblirsch

Family is everything. It is a base—it gives you your origins. It is a sanctuary. It is a home. It is a foundation of stability and love.

Terry Goblirsch' was born in Minneapolis, Minnesota, in 1947, and her strong connection to her family throughout her life has made her who she is today.

Terry shares her favorite memories from her childhood, saying, "Growing up in a family of seven children with five crazy brothers, and always having someone to hang out with and to play with, or to argue and fight with. And it was a house full of noise, kids, friends, and pets!"

Terry's parents were Marion and Henry (Hank) Merlowski. They had seven children—Marne, Terry, John, Michael, Peter, and Philip.

Terry's favorite food as a child was spaghetti, and today, her favorite food remains the same! Thinking back on her childhood, Terry reflects on her mother and father being an influential person throughout her life.

"My mother was one of the strongest women I've ever known. She was nonstop energy, totally devoted

to her children. She was the Enforcer, we called her. … She was beautiful and very classy with a wicked sense of humor. My father was probably one of the hardest working men I've ever known. He was compassionate, he was kind, he was loving, totally devoted to his family, and faith—very strong faith with him. It was very important. His life was based around that."

A big tradition in Terry's family were birthdays . They always involved homemade cakes, or Dairy Queen ice cream cakes. She and her family members' birthdays were filled with partying, decorations, and presents. Another tradition in Terry's family was a big Christmas.

"Christmas was huge in our family, and being part of a large extended family of grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins, holidays were always big, especially Christmas. My grandfather, and later my uncle Kenny, would dress up as Santa Claus and give out the presents. My grandparents were from Italy—Rocksy and Mary DeLuca. They dropped the a in DeLuca to assimilate to the U.S. And at Christmas they would put on the music and dance the Tarantella, and we'd all join in. It was great!"

Terry's Christmas mornings were some of her favorite childhood memories.

"I remember coming down on Christmas morning and seeing the entire living room was wall to wall presents, and my mother had neatly arranged seven different piles, each one for us kids, and we all just raced to them and started throwing paper and everything. So a lot of commotion on that. And as we opened the gifts, my father, at that time, had gotten a new video camera—they were just coming in—and he videotaped all the chaos."

Terry's childhood home was on a street called Pahl Avenue in St. AnthonyVillage. Her father was a contractor, and when the war ended, he opened his own business. The whole block on Pahl Avenue was mostly built by Terry's father, including their home.

"It was a very fun, close neighborhood, with lots of families, and lots of children. We'd have block parties, Fourth of July parties where we'd close off the road, and everybody decorated their bikes with red, white and blue crepe paper and streamers. And we had parades and costumes and barbecues, food, mostly hot dogs and ice cream. It was wonderful. And every night you'd stay out, and my mom would kick us out in the morning. She was glad to get all seven of us out of there, and then we wouldn't see her until lunch or whatever, otherwise we wouldn't see her till dark. And nobody was worried about safety or where these kids were or who they were playing with. Everybody just

played together, and we never worried about things like that at that time."

Terry's family always had dachshunds, all by the name of Wrinkles.

"There might have been a Wrinkles Three, but I'm not sure. They were very cute dogs, kind of chubby because we were always feeding them, even though we weren't supposed to!"

As a kid, Terry's favorite thing to do was read. She would ride her bike to the library on Central Ave, and fill up her basket with books.

"I became very good friends with the librarian, because every week I'd go through all my books, I'd read them all, and I'd go back, and she'd have books lined up for me, waiting for me. She'd say, "Terry, I think you're gonna like these." And she would actually help me load them up in my basket. We'd tie them up, and I'd ride them back home, and could hardly wait to get back and just devour them!"

Reading is still one of Terry's favorite hobbies. Some of her favorite authors include the Bronte sisters, and Jane Eyre, a favorite book being Wuthering Heights.

Growing up, Terry had big dreams. Thinking back on her childhood, she says, "I wanted to be a cowgirl. My bike was my horse. We rode them all over, and I had it

named. I don't remember the name, but that's how we did it. And then that of course changed—I wanted to be a nurse. But obviously, I didn't become a cowgirl or a nurse."

In her teen years, Terry enjoyed her time at a private, all-girls parochial school—St. Margaret's Academy. It was run by the Sisters of St. Joseph, and things were very strict, but Terry loved it there.

"I loved uniforms and everything, and I loved the classes. It was very strict but provided a great foundation for later life and just growing up. Discipline. It was a liberal arts education. I took four years of Latin, which I was very, very good at. … And even in my first year of college, I took a fifth year of Latin."

In school, Terry participated in sports. She was a starting forward for a basketball team, and she also did ice skating in the winter. Another one of her extracurricular activities was piano.

"As we were teenagers and started driving, there were two hangouts. One was Porky's Drive In, and everybody would go through there, and they'd drive their car through, making loops through, just so everyone could see them, and honk their horns. … And another one was Bridgeman's Ice Cream. And my favorite thing was the triple banana split. It was to die for. It was amazing."

Terry married Richard Goblirsch, and together they had three kids—Lisa, Laurie, and Tony. In June of 1982, Terry's family moved from Minnesota to California, because Richard had accepted a new job.

"Probably one of the most difficult challenges I had was the move from Minnesota to California and leaving my family and friends … starting a new life in a state that I'd never even visited. It meant I had to find a new home, set up schools, medical, dental, and find new friends for three children who were very, very angry and upset at making the move. So that was very challenging. But family stepped up and saved the day! New friends and neighbors provided a support network and new experiences, and a steady stream of family visiting also was an emotional lifeline for me. It really made the difference."

Terry gained a lot from this challenge. She shares what she finds most valuable, saying, "One of the most important lessons I have learned is flexibility and the ability to adapt. In other words, I did not want to leave, I did not want to go, but it was something I had to do, and you have to be flexible. You have to adapt and accept change. And change is a constant in life, and the ability to accept and adjust to change is key to how successful and happy we are."

Terry's life was filled with travel. As a senior manager of operations for a biotech compact, and eventually project management, she traveled globally.

"I loved working with and managing people and groups. I loved watching them grow and develop their skill sets. … I traveled extensively, I was all over the world. I negotiated contracts—mostly that was my responsibility when I was out of the country."

Some of the places Terry traveled to for work included London, Paris, Singapore, Japan, Narita, and Tokyo. And outside of work, Terry's has been to many places in Europe.

"Portugal, believe it or not, is one of my favorites. I loved Italy. Everything about Italy, I would go back. But Portugal actually was very, very fun. And when I travel, I travel with my family. Not all my brothers, but most of my brothers and some of their wives go. We have a "sibling trip", we call it, and we're very compatible, believe it or not, all these brothers and sisters, and we get along. And we have a great time!"

Terry's career helped her grow as a person. She developed life skills, and it shaped her into who she is today.

"My career helped me step out of my comfort zone and see potential I'd never realized I had. My experiences as a manager developed my ability in

dealing with a diverse group of individuals and personalities. I realized I had a talent in people skills, communication and mostly organization, which provided value to my development and that of the organization. I could see that I was making a difference in people and other co-workers and in the company, and that made me feel good. There was pride in that."

Terry is most proud of her children. She has raised three children, who all married and had children of their own, strengthening Terry's family bond even more. Her family is what has brought her the most joy in life.

Speaking about her kids, Terry said, "They are perfect. I'm so proud of how they've grown into these amazing, loving, family-oriented individuals, and they reflect the values and traditions of our family. All three of my children have chosen the most perfect spouses. They also have amazing marriages and children. All seven of my grandchildren also are perfect—loving, intelligent and definitely family-oriented."

Terry's family is the biggest part of her life. Her family members have shaped her, and made her who she is. She recognizes how fortunate she is to have these people supporting her everyday.

"I put the emphasis on family, because family and friends and their impact on my life—how truly valuable these relationships have been and continue to be in my life and in my happiness. And how very fortunate I have been to have these amazing people in my life supporting me always. It's important not to take this for granted."

Having lived a life of experience, Terry also has advice she wishes to pass on to younger generations.

"The one thing that comes to mind, especially in this day and age, is the value and importance of social interaction. It's so heartbreaking to me to see what's happening to so many people, including our younger generations. Covid probably was a major influence in that, but the lack of social interaction. … I think if they don't realize it now, there's going to be a major, major negative impact on their lives going forward. Social interaction is critical to our being a healthy individual, and you just can't underestimate that."

Continuing her thoughts on advice, Terry adds, "Get outdoors, meet new people, stop complaining about everything you don't have, and be grateful for everything that you have been given! There's always going to be people who have less than you. So look at it and put it in perspective. … Just be grateful for what you have. Stop comparing yourself to other people. You're your own individual—take pride in

that! You're valuable. And don't take yourself too seriously; maintain and develop a sense of humor. Everyone makes mistakes. They should be a learning experience, not life defining."

Terry has seen the world and built a career, but what she is most proud of in life is not her job, or her travels. It is her base, her origins, her sanctuary, her home—in other words, her family.

Frames of a Lifetime

Terry's life in pictures—a collection of her time with all of her loved one's. From her siblings to her children they all hold a special place in her heart.

"A Hard Start, But A Good Ending"

Lydia Burch

At 99 years old, Lydia Burch is the definition of overcoming challenges. She has faced obstacle after obstacle, starting as early as her childhood. Yet, every time something stood in her path, she persevered and kept moving forward.

Lydia was born on October 15, 1926 in Joliet, Illinois, to parents Louise and Anthony. She had a brother named Henry, and a sister named Amelia. When Lydia was just two years old, her family came to California, where she was raised and still resides today.

However, Lydia's childhood was not as carefree as most. She lost her mother at an early age, and she and her siblings were often home alone.

"[My childhood] wasn't too happy, because I lost my mother when I was 10 years old. My brother and my sister and I lived alone for a while because my dad remarried, and he didn't take us with her. We three kids lived alone. … My dad was a truck driver, and he would drive to LA and back, so he was gone for quite a bit."

Despite hardships, Lydia still holds on to warm memories from her early years.

“When we would go and pick fruit out on the farms, out in the country—that’s a favorite memory.

And through it all, family traditions kept everyone anchored together.

"We always had tamales at Christmas. We always went to church, the midnight service, and Christmas Day."

Lydia spent a lot of time in church, and her faith has played a strong role in her life.

“Most of my free time was spent in church. My girlfriend Rachel was a minister’s daughter, and we were close friends, so by default, we were always in church. She was my friend in and out of the church.”

In high school, Lydia was an Activity Commissioner during the war. She attended McClymonds High School in Oakland, California. She sold war stamps, and went to different rooms trying to sell them.

In high school, Lydi’s favorite class was Spanish. Reflecting on this, she said, “I enjoyed Spanish because it was easy! But I had to learn how to read and write it.”

One person who had an impact on Lydia’s life was her counselor. Lydia recalled, “My counselor in high

school was a major influence in my early life, because she influenced me in going to college."

After high school, Lydia went to school in Mexico City for a year. When she returned home, she went to the University of Berkeley. Then, she got a job for the Department of Public Health, and finally the finance department. She worked there for five years until she got married.

Lydia met her husband Leroy at a ballroom dance. Reflecting on this, she said, "On Sunday afternoons in Oakland, the band would be there, and then you'd pay your ticket, you'd go in, and then you'd sit around or stand or something. The boys would come up and ask you to dance. So he asked me to dance one afternoon, and we danced in the afternoon, and that was the beginning."

Lydia and husband married when she was 25, and he was 27.

"We had a white wedding. I had three bridesmaids, and we had a reception after. Dancing, and a reception at Lake Merritt in Oakland. … [My dress] was white, it had a lot of lace on it, and I had a short veil and a little crown."

Lydia's husband owned a dry cleaning business. She joined him for many years, and then ran the business herself for seven years after he sadly passed away.

"Through the business, I was able to do a lot of traveling all over the world, but I love my country best."

Lydia had three sons—one has sadly passed away, one lives in Colorado, and the other lives in Reno.

"The one in Colorado calls me every week, and every Sunday, the one in Reno calls me up every day or every other day and we have a good relationship. … The oldest one is Anthony, who is 72, 73 I think. And the other one will turn 70."

Lydia is not only a mother, but a grandmother, great grandmother, and great great grandmother.

"I have seven grandchildren. I have great grandchildren—I think about 13 great grandchildren. And I have two great great grandchildren."

Lydia also sadly lost her brother to a tragic incident. She experiences many losses in her life, but she was always able to overcome these things because of her faith.

"I have faith in God that He watches over me and helps me, and I keep close to him. I pray every day, and He answers my prayers."

When speaking about what she is most proud of in life, Lydia said, "I have raised three sons, who have all been happy. I've lived a good life. I have friends, and I enjoy my friends. I go out to lunch, I go to church, and try to stay healthy."

Lydia herself said it best—a hard beginning, but a good ending. And at 99 years old, with seven grandchildren, thirteen great grandchildren, and two great great grandchildren surrounding her, it is clear that the ending is nothing short of beautiful.

A Glimpse Back

This photo captures Lydia on her wedding day, a meaningful moment that reflects an important chapter in her life and the beginning of a new one.

"102 and Going Strong"

Jean Grealish

Jean Grealish is the kind of person that most aspire to be like—at 102 years old, she is enjoying life, supported by her friends and family.

Jean grew up in a house with her mother, three aunts, and her grandmother and grandfather.

"My parents were separated, and my mother had to work, so my grandmother raised me. I was very close to her. I was the only grandchild, until I was nine, then the other cousins were born."

Jean lived across the street from Most Holy Redeemer grammar school, and the church was down the street.

"I attended MHR from the time I was six. Another student and I skipped the third grade. I used to get a holiday on my birthday because February 22nd was a legal holiday—George Washington's birthday."

Reflecting on her favorite places to hang out, Jen recalled, "One of my favorites is the 1939 Fair on Treasure Island. It took over the whole island. I would meet my friends and stop for hot chocolate and French fries. I was 15. There were telephones, rides … Freddie Martin and his singer Bill Stoker, who was very handsome."

Another one of Jean's favorite memories from her childhood is when her mother took her to Golden Gate Park to ride the ponies when she was little. She also remembers playing out in front of her house with other kids on the block.

"I had a dog named Peggy—a black and white terrier—and one of my aunts trained her to play hide and seek with us."

Jean's grandmother was an admirable woman, and a huge role model in her life.

"My grandmother was everything to me, mainly because she raised me. Her daughters all lived around her because she was so wonderful and everyone came to dinner every Sunday night."

Some of Jean's family traditions growing up included holiday dinners—Christmas, Easter, and more.

"For Christmas, my aunt and uncle would take me to deliver presents to other relatives. When we left our house, there weren't any presents there, but when we came back there were presents everywhere and a beautifully decorated Christmas tree."

For the summer, Jean and her family enjoyed spending time at a home in Redwood City.

“We didn’t go on vacation, except to a house that my grandfather and his brother built. We would go there for a week in the summer, and we would visit relatives who lived down there."

During her childhood, Jean’s favorite thing to do was to play with her cousins and the neighborhood kids—Gina, Mary Rita, and Jenny.

She attended Mission High School in San Francisco and graduated in 1941. She had a few close friends, but was very shy.

"I didn't participate in any extracurricular activities. Instead I went to the library a lot and read Agatha Christie, as well as buying a lot of records and listening to the radio. It was the Big Band Era."

When Jean was young, she wanted to be a librarian so she could read books while she worked. But instead, she became a secretary.

“In those days, women either became a teacher, a secretary or a nurse. … I grew up during the Depression. In those days, the men went to work and the women raised the children. They were the backbone of the family."

In college, Jean’s favorite class was English, since she liked the teacher.

Thinking back on her time in college, Jean recalled, "We used to go to the Newman Club, a Catholic church and recreation room, where we could play pool and play our favorite records on the juke box. One of my friends hid the 'Moonlight Serenade' record, which was my favorite, because she was so tired of hearing it. In my free time, I read."

In terms of career, Jean was a model for a period of time.

"I modeled for a while when I was younger and worked as a secretary until I had children. I went back to work as a secretary once my children were raised."

When Jean first saw her husband, James (Jim) Grealish, she immediately fell in love with him.

"I saw my future husband walking down the street and fell madly in love with him. I found out his name and he sent me an invitation to join the club of which he was president. He asked me out, but in the meantime he went to Officer Training School for the war, so we kept in touch with letters throughout the war."

Jean's husband was in San Francisco on leave when the USA bombed Japan, signaling the end of the war. Jean and James, and some friends, went to the Palace Hotel to celebrate.

"He stayed in the Naval Reserve and retired as a Rear Admiral. He was a wonderful husband and we were married for 67 years before he passed away in December 2013."

When it comes to accomplishment, Jean is most proud of her children. “They turned out beautifully and I couldn't have asked for better ones. … My family has brought me the most joy in life—my husband, kids, cousins, aunts, uncles, mother, grandparents, grandkids, great grandkids."

Reflecting on her life, Jean wrote, "I am 102 and going strong. I have 3 children who spoil me. I live alone, but the kids stay at night. I have wonderful grandkids—9 plus spouses—14 great grandkids and wonderful sons in law and daughter in law."

Jean Grealish continues to enjoy her life, surrounded by family, friends, and love.

Sharing the best advice for younger generations, she wrote, "Be loyal, stick together, stand up for what is right, keep a happy home and be able to laugh at yourself."

Life On Display

A collection of memories spanning decades, showing Jean through the years and the life she has created with those she loves.

CONCLUSION

Every life has its own personal journey. This is apparent through *Chapters of a Lifetime*. Memories of childhood, career paths, struggles and joy—we all have some things in common—this shared experience is proof of how different each person's life story is and yet connect us all through commonality.

Many of the people in this book spoke about change—whether it was changing careers, overcoming challenges, or adapting to new stages of life. Their stories show that life is not defined by a single moment, but by the ability to keep moving forward. As Wendy Anegeles reminds us, "When you get old, my age, then you can start over again." Growth does not stop at a certain age; instead, it continues, often in ways we do not expect.

Another theme that is evident in these stories is that relationships are important. Family, friendship, and love were all significant factors in each of these people's lives. Family, friendship, and love were all significant factors in each of these people's lives. Whether it was traditions passed down through generations or just spending time together in everyday life, these connections were often what mattered most.

This project illustrates the importance of sharing and saving stories. As Wendy explains in this book, "It's really important to capture history, because it'll be gone if you don't." If we do not share these stories, they will be lost on us. By saving these stories, we can make sure that these experiences continue to be a part of their families for generations to come.

At its core, this book is about appreciating the value in every person's story. Sister Carol reminds us to "Bring out the best in you for the world," and this is not just about how we live our own lives, but also how we honor the lives of those around us.

Beyond being a collection of interviews, *Chapters of a Lifetime* also represents an opportunity for us to take a step back, ask questions, and listen to the answers. The stories presented in these chapters will live on through the people who bring them into the future; as such, they will influence the lives of future generations in a myriad of ways.

QUESTIONS TO ASK

These questions are meant to spark meaningful conversations with your elders. Ask them to share their stories, memories, and wisdom. You might be surprised by what you learn.

Childhood & Early Life

- When and where were you born?
- Do you have a nickname? How did you get it?
- What was your childhood home like?
- What was your favorite childhood book?
- What is your favorite memory from childhood?
- What was your favorite food as a child?
- Who did you look up to when you were younger? Has that changed?
- Who was a major influence in your early life?
- What's a tradition from your childhood that you wish would continue?
- Did you do anything for the holidays?
- Did you have any pets growing up?
- Did you have any hangout spots growing up?
- Who was your best friend growing up? What is your earliest memory of them?

School & Education

- What was your high school experience like?

- Which school subject did you enjoy the most? Why?
- What were your favorite classes?
- Did you participate in any extracurriculars?
- Who was your best friend at school?
- What did you want to be when you grew up?
- Did you go to college? What was that experience like?

Personal Experiences & Memories

- What is the most embarrassing thing you have ever done?
- Is there a moment in history you remember vividly?
- What moment of your life has had the biggest impact on you?
- What was a challenge you faced that taught you something important?
- Are there any challenges you had to overcome?
- What's a piece of technology or trend that amazed you when it first came out?

Relationships & Love

- Who was the first person you ever fell in love with?
- How did you meet your spouse or partner?
- What was your wedding like?

- What was the most important lesson your parents taught you?
- What's the best advice you've ever received?

Career & Community

- What did you do for work?
- How did your career shape you?
- How did your role in your family or community shape who you are today?
- If you had to teach a class on one thing, what would it be?

Hobbies & Interests

- What are your hobbies?
- What is your taste in music?
- What is your favorite color?
- What is your favorite animal?
- What is your favorite food now?
- Do you have a favorite recipe?
- What never fails to make you laugh?
- What's a place you've always wanted to visit, and why?

Achievements & Life Lessons

- What is your proudest accomplishment?
- What advice would you give to younger generations?

- What has brought you the most joy in life?
- If you had a time machine, what would you use it for?
- If your life were a book, what would you title this current chapter?
- Is there anything you would do differently if you could?
- What is one thing you hope people remember about you?

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This project would not have been made possible without the kindness, time and wisdom of the individuals who have shared their life experiences with us. We are so thankful for the generosity of each of our participants who have opened their hearts and given us a chance to share their experiences, challenges and accomplishments.

Our heartfelt thanks go to Joanne Ferretti, Bettina Devin, Joseph Lysek Jr., Linda Rosner, Hugh and Judy Tuck, Wendy Angeles, Ronald Mei, Terry Goblirsch, Lydia Burch, and Jean Grealish.

Each participant shared something of great value; from childhood memories to career successes, to family traditions and lessons from life. Together, their stories made this project richer and gave us insight into the many perspectives that shape people's lives.

We would also like to thank Mason Jeffrey and Carol Miller, whose willingness to converse with us and provide firsthand knowledge on their experiences enriched our understanding of the various accounts presented within this project.

A big thank you to David Muir, our Social Justice teacher, for his support in respectfully and thoughtfully approaching all types of issues that are

connected to social justice. His valuable input allowed us to present these stories in a way that acknowledges the real people behind them.

We're also grateful to Robert Rojas for reviewing our work and helping us make it clearer. And thank you to Hope Goblirsch for connecting us with so many of the interviewees. Without her, a lot of these conversations wouldn't have happened.

Finally, thanks to our families, friends, and mentors for supporting us throughout this project. From helping with research and interviews to reading drafts, their encouragement meant a lot.

This project has been immensely rewarding, not only as an academic endeavor but also as a way to learn from those in the past and see all the various ways throughout life. The continued support provided by all those who have contributed will be forever appreciated by us all.